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ABSTRACT

The nature of educational settings and the relationship between educational settings and educational change is discussed. It is suggested that the standard linear organizational structure within most school settings is detrimental to the implementation and development of creative change strategies. The rigidity of this type of organizational structure promotes the attitude that change cannot be brought about, which, in turn, all but ensures that change will not occur. The notion of the educational environment as a macro- or microsystem is explained, and examples of successful change programs using this notion are given. It is suggested that a new way of thinking about educational change, based on the macrosystem/microsystem hypothesis, is needed. (LH)

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# "MAKING IT STICK"....THE ELUSIVE PROBLEM OF ACCOUNTING FOR EDUCATIONAL CHANGE

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This paper is primarily concerned with the nature of educational settings, and the relationship of settings to our conception of educational change. A major postulate of this paper is that change in educational settings occurs simultaneously on a variety of levels, and that educational settings are far more complex than many change agents allow them to be. The paper will be in two primary sections. First, a review of major arguments regarding educational settings will be presented. Second, these arguments will be elaborated through a discussion of staff development efforts in the Department of Instruction and Learning at Murray State University.

James Herndon, in his book How To Survive in Your Native Land, places the problem of talking about change neatly into perspective with the following quote:

> We feel we have nothing to do with it, beyond the process of managing what is presented to us. Presented to us by whom? The principal? But the principal tells us at faculty meetings that this is the situation, he didn't invent it, we must only live with it. The superintendant? He gives us an inspiring speech on opening day, but beyond that he makes it clear that our problems are not his invention. We are all in the same boat, he wants to tell us. The board of education? The state board? The superintendant of public instruction? No, man, they didn't do it. Who decided that Egypt is just right for seventh graders? Who decided that California Indians must enter the world of fourth grade kids, or that South America must be "learned" by sixth graders?
>
> Nobody, it seems, made any of these decisions. Noman did it. Noman is responsible for them. (Herndon, 1971, p.90)

This quote, it seems to me, points directly to a primary problem in change-agenting; the problem of "making it stick." "Making it Stick" is the problem of translating an innovation from a short term, easy-to-identify change, to a stable, part-of-the-system, routine, "that's just the way we do it around here" part of everyday life. "Making it Stick" is elusive, because although it is often easy to identify the antecedents to proposed changes, it is less easy to understand why changes in educational systems so often do not bear the fruit that was hoped for. Too often, it seems, Noman really caused a change to be thwarted...it just seemed to be the nature of the system.

Berman (1979), in discussing strategies for change, suggests that the context

of an educational setting "profoundly" effects its chance for success. In particular, he points to the institutional setting or policy arena as being of particular importance. Berman (1979, pp. 22-25), distinguishes between "micro" settings (formal organizations such as schools or health care center, and "macro" settings diverse governments, bureaucracies, local delivery systems...interacting in large arenas). Berman himself uses the distinction to differentiate between descrete social systems and the collections of systems which comprise the arena for national policy. However, it seems that the "micro-macro" distinction could equally be applied to the individual units within which educational change agents work and the collections of units between which they must operate. For example, micro systems might be the individual schools or graduate programs within which we work, and the macro systems might be the school districts and all of the departments which make up the school of education.

Recognition of the micro-macro system distinction implies that change occurs simultaneously or in tandem at several levels; making it necessary to account for change in a variety of ways, rather than by examining a few seemingly important variables. A related concept which is useful in accounting for change is that of the cultural nature of educational organizations.

Schools operate according to cultural rules (Johnson, Collins, Dupuis, Johansen, 1969, p. 6) "There are explicit rules and implicit expectations regarding the ways in which teachers relate to pupils, parents, administrators, and each other. Just as there are rules about smoking, so also there are specific expectations regarding dress, speech, and eating behavior." (Johnson, et al., 1969, p. 6) Because schools operate according to cultural rules change is complex and difficult to control. For example, it is often assumed that the relevant elements of an educational system which must be taken into account in promoting a change are recognizable and accessible to the participants in the system. In a cultural view, a great many elements in any

organization or system are latent--"largely unintended and unrecognized by the members (of the organization) themselves." (McCall and Simmons, 1969, p. 5) The latent quality of much of what goes on in the life of an educational organization places many elements effectively outside of the control of the change agent. This is because these elements are not a part of the discourse, the records, or the organizational structure of the system under consideration. As such, they cannot be legitimately talked about, planned about, or organized for or against. This is particularly important when a change involves a new role or self-concept for a member of an educational organization. In a cultural sense, changes in role are governed by rules of social transition (Eddy, 1969, p. 20-24), and teachers understanding of themselves in new roles takes place in a context of conflicting role expectations and anticipations. (McPherson, 1972, pp. 8-14). Acceptance or denial of the usefulness or validity of new roles comes only from the group within which the teacher must work. The change agent does not have direct access to group acceptance, and so cannot influence it directly. This means that the process of change must be expected to be absorbed throughout the system. This will usually take much longer than anticipated, and to result in variations in the educational system which may not have been delineated in the original planning.

Not all change, of course, occurs through cultural processes. The whole history of social change in the United States during the decade of the sixties and seventies was one of attempting to influence educational systems through the process of law and regulation. At heart, the need to legislate change supports the importance of cultural transimission, because it points up the great difficulty, complexity, and time that it takes to change the status quo through persuasion, training, or personal leadership. Sometimes, in fact, change agents have questioned whether educational settings can remain stable enough over sufficiently long periods of time for systemic

change to occur. Often, policy changes are sought to short-circuit the dissemination process, and to ensure compliance to proposed change. Policy change, however, although powerful, does have the problem of creating many of the same dissatisfactions and cultural disfunctions that the change agent seeks to avoid.

In the next section, the notion of micro and macro settings will be explored through the consideration of staff development efforts in the Department of Instruction and Learning at Murray State University. The first subsection, A Short History of Field-Based Projects , will clarify the context for change that was promoted by six field-based projects that occurred between 1974 and 1980.

## Elaboration On The Role Of Educational Settings In Change: Field-Based Projects At Murray State

### A Short History of Field-Based Projects

Before the 1970's graduate teacher education at Murray State University consisted primarily of on-campus work, often scheduled as evening and summer courses to be available for teachers in the region. Few problems arose from this model. Faculty and students alike generally understood that graduate education was synonymous with the accumulation of course credit. The standard roles of teacher education faculty and the status of teacher education at the University were not greatly affected by this approach to teacher education.

However, during the 1970's there were six important efforts made by the Department of Instruction and Learning at Murray State University to initiate new ways of conducting teacher training through graduate education programs. Each of these efforts moved the essentially on-campus model of teacher education to a more field-based, multidimensional model which included direct involvement of the graduate program in the on-going life of the public schools. Taken in progression, each of these efforts contributed to a changed way of conducting graduate teacher education, although the changes which occurred were often unanticipated and disjointed.

Project EPIC, 1974-1975. Project EPIC was a training program aimed at Educational Improvement Through Individualized Programs. It brought a cadre of practicing teachers from the MSU service region to Murray State University's campus for training in techniques for individualization. This cadre of teachers then conducted training workshops in the schools during the year. Efforts were made by the EPIC staff to involve principals in the program and follow up on the teacher training workshops during the year.

Cycle X Teacher Corps, 1975-1977. Cycle X Teacher Corps initiated the first real efforts to change the form of graduate education at Murray State. Responding to Teacher Corps guidelines, the Instruction and Learning staff developed a two-year staff development package which allowed teachers to earn a master's degree or +30 certificate while working in their school on Teacher Corps objectives. Cycle X Teacher Corps brought professors into the school to deliver credit-bearing inservice activities, and began the process of trying to accommodate the on-campus, course-based graduate program with the realities of working in an inservice-oriented, field-based graduate program. A product of Cycle X Teacher Corps was the concept of "responsive inservice education." (See Schroeder and Hainsworth, A Responsive Inservice Graduate Education Model, 1977)

Kentucky Partnership Project, 1977-80. The Kentucky Partnership was a direct outgrowth of the Cycle X Teacher Corps Project, and operated in the same school district without federal funds or guidelines. The Kentucky Partnership built directly on the Teacher Corps experience with responsive, field-based graduate education. However, it brought participants in the change process together to pursue change without the bludgeon of federal guidelines. The flexibility of the Partnership allowed the concept of responsive inservice education to develop in ways which were more in keeping with cultural realities at Murray State, the participating county (Christian County), and the State Department of Education.

The Henderson Project, 1978-80. The Henderson Project, Henderson, Kentucky, grew out of continued interest in developing MSU field-based graduate programs, coupled with an interest in promoting a new, alternative master's degree. The program was conceptualized as occurring in a two-year block, being extremely teacher-centered, and combining a wide-variety of teacher activities with the assignment of graduate credit. The Henderson project lacked the school-improvement component of Cycle X Teacher Corps and the Kentucky Partnership.

Project '78 Teacher Corps, 1978-80. Project '78 Teacher Corps (Henry County, Tennessee) also operated concurrently with the Kentucky Partnership and the Henderson Project. It was written following Teacher Corps guidelines and had components of school imporovement, inservice, training, and community involvment. The graduate program, however, was modeled on the experience of Cycle X Teacher Corps and the Kentucky Partnership, and consisted of discrete graduate courses taught in the responsive mode. These classes were not offered in a two year block (as in the Cycle X Teacher Corps and the Henderson Project) and were not tied directly to the Teacher Corps Project objectives.

Project PATL, Secondary Staff Development Project, 1979-81. Project PATL (Positive Attitudes Towards Learning) was initiated in the same county in which the Cycle X Teacher Corps project had operated and the Kentucky Partnership was operating (as an elementary staff development project). Project PATL was built on the Nationally Validated PATL program, had a two-year life spann, and had a projected wide range of staff development objectives which far exceeded the original PATL objectives. Project PATL was built more on the Henderson approach to graduate programs, conceptualizing the entire program in a two year block, and adapting the course structure of the Master's degree and +30 programs to the actual activities which would be carried on in the school district.

Summary. Efforts to change the way in which graduate teacher education programs are carried out at Murray State University have had a five year history. At the time

of this writing four of these programs are still in operation, with plans for them to continue to operate in the future. Efforts to change the graduate programs were initiated through Cycle X Teacher Corps, but have continued in each of the different projects. Professors in the various projects have been from one department at MSU, and many of the professors have worked in more than one of the programs. All of the programs have taken place under the auspices of existing elementary and secondary education graduate programs, so that the change effort has involved continuous examination of, and tampering with, a single, standard way of doing business at the University. The experience of conducting these six projects has brought Instruction and Learning faculty members into contact with many (if not all) of the education systems in Kentucky which have interests in graduate education and inservice teacher education in the MSU service region.

Discussion of Micro and Macro Settings In The Staff Development Projects

Because the effort to change the way that graduate teacher education is conducted at Murray State University has had a relatively long history and has included a number of different change projects, it is difficult to assess exactly where we have been and where we are going. Utilizing the notion of micro and macro systems, however, it is possible to reflect on where changes have occurred and the scope of these changes. The following figure summarizes some elements of micro systems and macro systems which functioned during the years 1975-80 in the Department of Instruction and Learning. While inspecting Figure 1, the following descriptions of micro and macro systems will be useful.

Micro Systems are those systems where there is face-to-face interaction between the participants and the change agent which facilitates common language, concepts, sympathies, and shared experiences.

Macro Systems are those systems which include interactions across micro systems. Macro systems usually do not provide opportunities for members of the micro systems to gain face-to-face participation across micro system lines.

Figure 1: Selected Elements of Educational Systems Related To Field-Based Graduate Programs at MSU

| Projects | MICRO-Systems | MACRO-Systems |
|---|---|---|
| Cycle X Teacher Corps, 1975-77 | 1. Work in Middle School by project staff with individuals and groups on specific changes.<br>2. Work by project staff to develop coherent graduate Teacher Education program.<br>3. Work by project staff to produce demonstration products. | 1. Work on school-wide change across faculty groups (middle school)<br>2. Work between project staff and other IHE faculty in department to gain approval for field-based programs. (as in approval for comprehensive exam)<br>3. Work between project staff and DOE and University Registrar to approve certification for teachers after Teacher Corps project.<br>4. Work with college faculty to explain Teacher Corps. |
| Kentucky Partnership 1977-80 | 1. Work with Dean, Superintendent and Department Chairman to develop and operate project<br>2. Work with individuals and groups in the schools on program development | 1. Work with intra-school groups and cross-school groups for concensus on improvement programs.<br>2. Work on mechanics of multiple-agency funding agreements. |
| Henderson Project, 1978-80 | 1. Work with individual teacher process groups on individual professional growth<br>2. Work in developing and maintaining the graduate center in Henderson | 1. Work by Henderson Project Staff with on-campus professors in matching courses to the Henderson program.<br>2. Work by Henderson project staff with Henderson district administrators on staff development. |

Reference to Figure 1 shows that micro systems generally involved relatively small groups working together over time on some specific topic. Micro groups were able to develop close working relationships, establish a history of goal-directed activities

and gain a shared working experience. Micro systems, however, also tended to have little interactions of the same sort with participants outside of the micro group on the same set of change concerns. Macro system interactions tended to be less regular, and to have less opportunity to develop shared experiences with change as was the case in the micro groups. It was often possible to generate changes (or ideas for changes) within a micro system. On the other hand, it was typically very difficult to either convey the changes to members of the macro system or to convince members in the macro system to "buy into" ideas or issues proposed by micro system groups.

The following extension of figure 1 illustrates how the micro-macro concept can be applied to all of the Instruction and Learning change efforts (related to field-based projects) between 1974 and 1980. The illustration should emphasize that the concept of micro groups or macro groups is fluid. These groups come together as they focus on problems or needs for change. The micro groups identify and interact with macro systems as there is a need to place the change within the overall context within which it will ultimately operate.

Figure 1 Extension: Micro and Macro Systems in The Department of Instruction and Learning, 1974-80.

| | Micro-Systems | Macro-Systems |
|---|---|---|
| Department of Instruction and Learning 1974-1980 | 1. Individuals and small groups working to conceptualize, develop, and conduct field-based projects<br>2. Individual committees work on the "regular" graduate program<br>3. Committees working to pull together ideas from the field-based projects (1979-80) | 1. Individuals work to disseminate knowledge of individual projects among department faculty.<br>2. The department as a whole working to develop directions for off-campus programs.<br>3. Work by groups to inform other university departments about I&L field-based projects<br>4. Regular contact between I&L with University Vice President for Accademic Affairs and University Committees |

In all of the projects conducted by the Department of Instruction and Learning, it has been an objective of individual micro groups to change the general method of conducting graduate programs from the standard on-campus model, to a model which emphasizes on-site coursework, participation in teacher's classrooms, and negotiation of course activities, etc. Within individual micro groups there has grown up considerable experience with conducting "responsive" coursework, and considerable commitment to this type of graduate program. When the micro groups have come together to share ideas, however, it has proven difficult to promote any one set of ideas. Groups working on the same problems develop slightly different languages, different emphases for elements of responsive coursework, and different value structures concerning goals. Then, when representatives of the micro-groups have had to interact with members of the macro system (university committees, school district groups, vice presidents, members of other departments) they have found it equally hard to establish the same points of reference and a similar sense of "buy in." Even when micro groups themselves are able to develop the common grounds necessary for coming together as a new micro group, they have found it no easier to interact with members of the macro system. (See Arends and Lovell, "The Uses and Nonuses of Knowledge In Higher Education", 1980 , for a discussion of how even a highly organized micro-group effort floundered when it had to deal head-on with members of the macro system.)

Discussion of A Changed Perspective on Change

The relationship between change efforts in the micro group sense and the macro system sense might be illustrated as follows:

Micro System ----------> Macro System

1. develop program
2. develop acceptance in group
3. spread idea to Macro System

1. involves a multiplicity of persons
2. there are many existing role expectations which will be challenged by micro-group ideas
3. there will be a lack of experience with, or sympathy for micro group ideas

4. there will be so many different relevant people to see that time will be difficult.
5. Some groups will have competing ideas to promote.

In this illustration, it is easy to see why ideas developed in micro systems often achieve little change in the macro system. It is often simply too hard to influence enough people or groups in the macro system to gain overall system acceptance of an idea...with the resulting effective translation of a micro change into a change of the way business is done in the macro system.

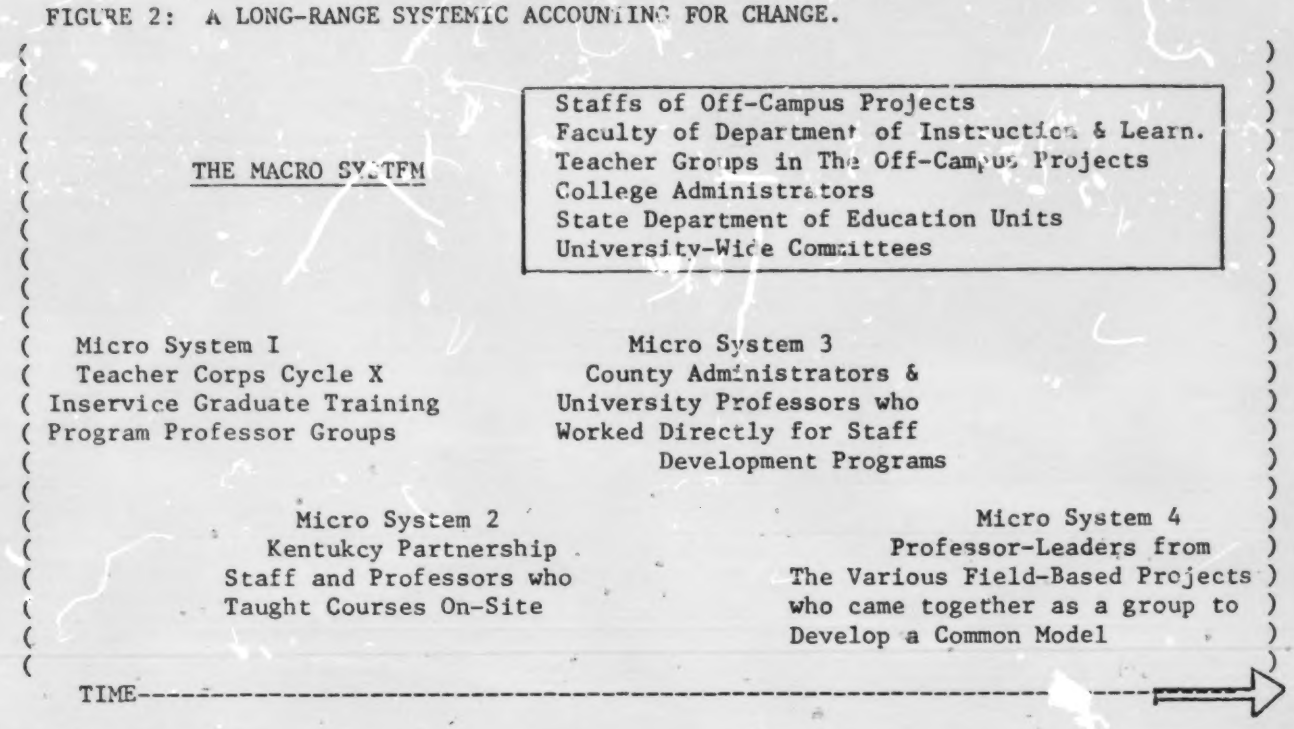
The preceding discussion would almost suggest that real, systemically disseminated change is almost impossible to achieve. In fact, many workers in education consider this bleak idea to be close to truth. However, the preceding discussion has also implied a general, linear model for change. Such a model has been proposed (Teacher Corps Research Cluster Core Group, 1980) and is as follows:

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Problem Identification | Develop Consensus on Solution | Program Development & Acquisition | Implementation (Adaptation) | Institutionalization |

This model, in the experience at Murray State has provided an efficient route to working out change ideas in micro settings. In these settings it has been possible to develop the shared experiences, to cooperate, approve of each other, understand each other, and generally go about the process of change. At the point of interaction with the macro system, however, (typically at the point of implementation and institutionalization) the model seems to break down. The point at which there is follow-through with the change becoming part of the standard operating procedure at Murray State University rarely occurs. (In fact, an official change towards responsive inservice graduate programs has never occurred at the University level.)

However, it may be that "our sights are set wrong" and we are not really cognizant of the changes which have actually been occurring. Figure 2 and Figure 2 Extended (pp. 12-13) illustrate another way of accounting for change.

FIGURE 2: A LONG-RANGE SYSTEMIC ACCOUNTING FOR CHANGE.




Anticipated Change: A New Way of Conducting MSU Graduate Education Programs (Responsive Inservice Graduate Education)

FIGURE 2 EXTENDED: EXAMPLES OF A METHOD FOR ACCOUNTING OF EFFECTS FROM MICRO SYSTEM CHANGE EFFORTS.

Anticipated Change: A New Way of Conducting MSU Graduate Education Programs (Responsive Inservice Graduate Education)

Effect 1: A Different Attitude Among Instruction and Learning Faculty Toward Field-Based Projects

Indicators:

A. At least 90% of the Instruction and Learning Faculty have participated in field-based work.
B. Cycle X Teacher Corps and The Kentucky Partnership have sponsored meetings to raise faculty consciousness about field-based work. These meetings have generally been successful.
C. Samplings of faculty who have taught responsive courses indicate that they have positive reactions to working directly with children and teachers in their classrooms.
D. 30-40% of the I & L faculty have willingly participated in more than one responsive course experiment.

Effect 2: Clarification of the Definition of Responsive Coursework

Indicators:
A. Papers written and shared with faculty describing field-based programs and raising issues relating to coursework.
B. New comprehensive exam formats for elementary and secondary education have been written that are similar to those proposed through Cycle X Teacher Corps and The Kentucky Partnership.
C. Micro Group 4 formed of project leaders from the Kentucky Partnership, Project '78 Teacher Corps, The Henderson Project, and Project PATL to write a common model. Two papers produced, one of which was presented at ASCD '80.

(Many other effects and indicators could be catalogued in regards to this change. However, due to lack of space, only these effects have been presented.)

Figure 2 and Figure 2 Extended (pp. 12-13) present a view of accounting for change which take into account both the micro and macro elements of educational systems, and also the cultural ways that change is disseminated. As can be seen, change in conducting the graduate programs (from an on-campus model to a field-based model) occurred (and continue to occur) over the span of six years. A variety of micro-groups pursued this change, with each group adding its own effects to the systemic change. In Figure 2 Extended, it is shown that change effects accumulate over time within the micro and macro systems. Given the cultural view, as the changes occur incrementally, they are absorbed by the social system, and, ultimately, become the standard way of conducting business. This sort of incremental change has occurred in the Department of Instruction and Learning, and although there continue to be some questions raised about specific techniques, field-based programs are generally anticipated as being part of the department's repetoire of activities. Although this process of change is only sketchily referred to in this paper, by utilizing the accounting system suggested in Figure 2 and Figure 2 Extended, it is possible to document how the change occurred, and to show that the change is in place in the department. Other effects of change such

as interactions with the University Vice President and University Standing Committees would also need to be documented to develop an understanding of the efforts which have begun to accumulate in these micro systems. I suspect that the results of this documentation would be that there have been few real interactions between I&L micro groups and these non-I&L groups within the University macro system. As a result, the ideas of Instruction and Learning faculty about field-based programs are little understood or accepted outside of the department. With this understanding, it is possible to suggest many more diverse efforts that need to be made to eliminate conceptual dysfunction between groups, so that change can begin to be disseminated throughout the Macro system.

It should be noted that the time line in Figure 2 does not have an end. In a cultural sense, change is not bounded by the life span of specific project-based change efforts. This means that the change agent always has the option of generating new micro-group efforts in his continuing attempt to accumulate the necessary change effects. This is paricularly important if the change agent sees that there are not change effects which will bridge the gap between micro groups within the macro system. (ie. bridging the gap between the project directors micro group and the university administration) Without specific mechanisms for cultural transmission, changes will not be disseminated.

## Summary

This paper has explored a way of thinking about change which, it appears to the writer, will make the accounting for change more manageable for the change-agent. In this view, change occurs within the micro and macro systems. Macro systems are not bounded by time, and change efforts occur in an open rather than a closed system. Most changes are worked out within micro systems because these systems are relatively small, task-oriented, and culturally similar enough to develop sufficient shared

experiences to produce a change. Micro systems, however, are limited by the fact that they exist within Macro systems. Macro systems comprise all of the micro systems that have responsibility for, or interest in, education in an area. Micro systems "share the pie" of responsibility for education, and so changes proposed by individual micro systems must be disseminated throughout the macro system. Dissemination of change occurs largely through cultural processes, wherein people come to know, understand, and accept new ideas. This sort of dissemination takes a long time, and is quite complex...requiring the change agent to account for accumulating effects, if he is to hope to direct them. In particular, the accounting for accumulated change allows the change agent to "fill the holes" where effects are not accumulating. A problem, is that educational macro systems are often not stable enough to allow the cultural process to run its full course. Often, then, change agents try to effect policy changes as soon as they can, so that the changes they hope to achieve will short-circuit the norman dissemination routes. Unfortunately, merely because policy decisions have been made and codified does not mean that they will be effectively implemented if they violate cultural realities in the macro system. Perhaps this is why educational change is such a challenge. The change agent must constantly work between the desire for quick change which may produce system dysfunction, and the painstaking, long process of overall dissemination of change through the cultural process.

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